MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Nobody was appointed *to act* as Chief Engineer.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): All right; to *look after* the duties of the Chief Engineer.

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): This Assistant Engineer was put in charge of the office of the Chief Engineer on account of his long experience of the work in that office and on account of the fact that the period was only short.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know whether Mr. Balakrishna Rao was paid any additional remuneration for the work that he did during this period?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): That question is still under the consideration of Government. Nothing has been paid.

Position of Mr. Balakrishna Rao.

284. **MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI** (*Chirayinkil*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether Mr. Balakrishna Rao has to give advice to, and control the work of, the several Executive Engineers who are superiors to him in rank and pay;

(*b*) whether Mr. Balakrishna Rao has, under the present arrangement, to countersign the travelling allowance bills of the Executive Engineers;

(*c*) whether the Government are aware that an Assistant Engineer cannot sanction any estimate for work for however small an amount or sanction contracts; and

(*d*) whether they are aware that the Executive Engineers can sanction estimates for works up to Rs. 500 and accept contracts up to Rs. 5,000?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): (*a*) and (*b*) The answers are in the negative.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) Yes.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know whether during this period Mr. Balakrishna Rao had any occasion to countersign the T. A. bill of any Executive Engineer?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): No. He was asked to send up the bills to the Government.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): May I know then who countersigned the T. A. bills during this period?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): The bills were countersigned by the Chief Secretary to Government.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*): Is there any provision to enable the Chief Secretary to countersign T. A. bills?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Yes, there is a provision in the Account Code which authorises the Chief Secretary to Government to countersign bills.

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MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*) : May I know the nature of the work transacted by Mr. Balakrishna Rao during this period?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : The routine work of the office.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*) : Was any appointment made by him?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : I do not think any appointment was made by him.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*) : Was any estimate sanctioned by him?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : No, he cannot sanction estimates. That is clear from the answer.

MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI (*Chirayinkil*) : Was it as an attractive person then that he was put in there?

Proposed Appointment of a Foreigner as Chief Engineer.

285. **MR. K. P. NILAKANTA PILLAI** (*Chirayinkil*) : Will the Government be pleased to state :

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the Government are attempting to secure an Engineer from outside the service and appoint him as Chief Engineer ;

(*b*) whether they are aware that there are competent European and Indian Engineers in the service with long experience in the department ;

(*c*) if the answer to part (*b*) is in the affirmative, why promotion should not be given to them in the order of their seniority ;

(*d*) whether they are aware that the pay of an Executive Engineer in British India is higher than that of the Chief Engineer in Travancore ; and

(*e*) whether they are aware that there has been a sustained complaint on the part of the people against giving officers borrowed from British India and elsewhere higher pay and emoluments than are warranted by the conditions of this State?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) and (*c*) There are European and Indian Engineers in the service with long experience in the department. The Government do not propose to disclose their opinion regarding the competency or otherwise of their officers.

(*d*) That is not so in all cases.

(*e*) The answer is in the negative.

Travelling Allowance to Division Assistants.

286. **MR. KALLUR NARAYANA PILLAI** (*Pattanamtitta*): Will the Government be pleased to state :

(*a*) the amount allotted to each Revenue Division under "Travelling Allowance to officers;"

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